

# IRELAND UNDER THE NORMANS

1216-1333

BY

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VOLS. III AND IV

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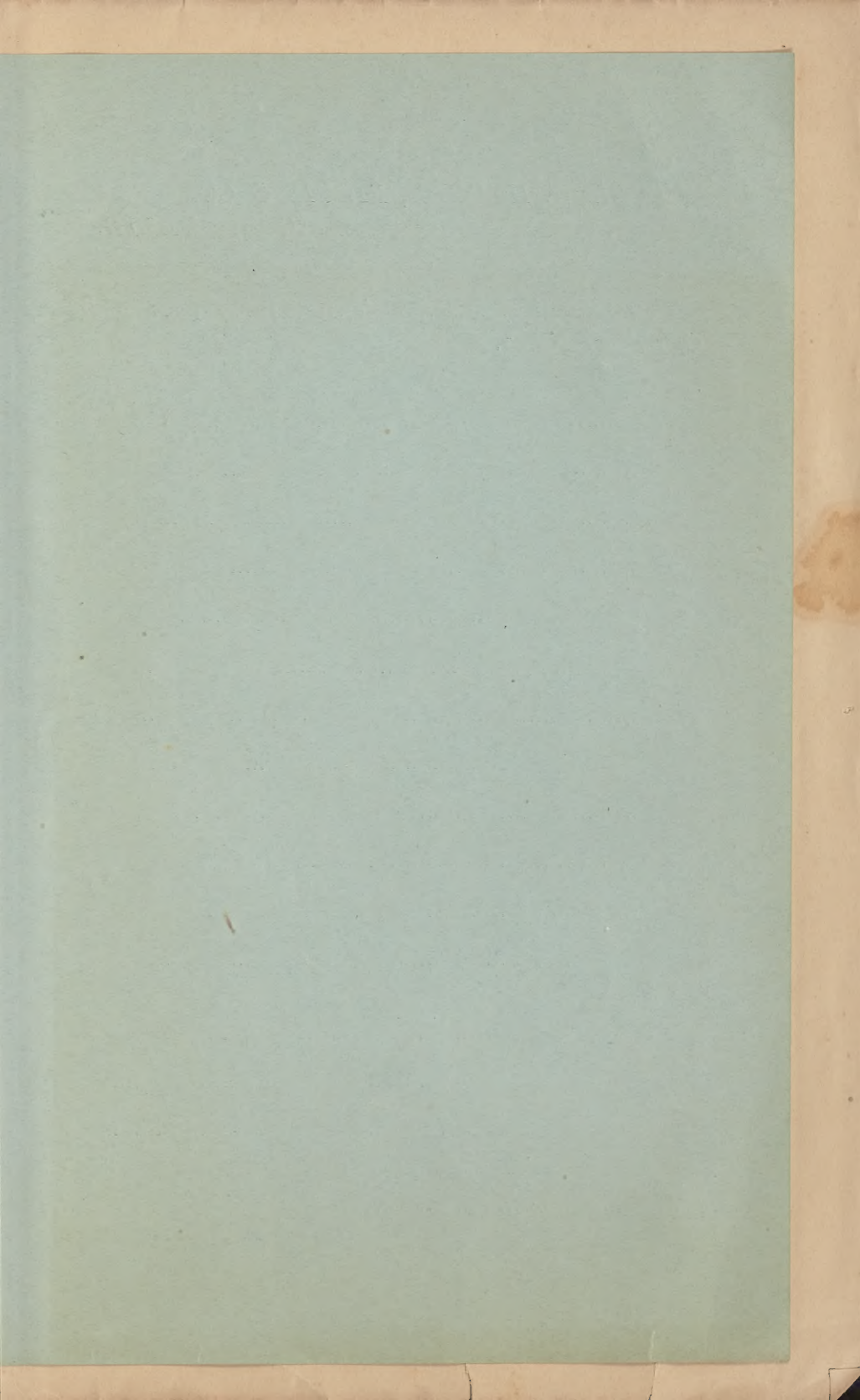
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when the Normans came was hardly alive. We have noted Ireland's gain by this new channel in trade and agriculture, in architecture and ecclesiastical organization, but it was still more manifest in the whole scheme of civil government, legislative, executive, and judicial. Norman rule in Ireland, in short, marks the introduction into a country which had never been through the school of Roman domination, of ideas of state-governance and organization which, as developed in the British Isles, have become the model for all the free governments of the world, and which in final analysis humanity owes to Imperial Rome.

We have now touched on some of the more important results of early Norman rule in Ireland. They constitute a great and rapid advance on the lines of mediaeval progress. Viewed broadly and as a whole, the thirteenth century was a great period in the history of Ireland, great in its performance and even greater in its promise. A new and greater Ireland was being developed, an Ireland fitted to co-operate in all that was making England great and to share in her greatness.

Why this progress was not maintained.

Not due to the character of the conquest.

But why, it will be asked, was this progress not maintained and this promise not fulfilled? or rather, why was there a marked retrogression from some of the points attained? For a full answer to this question a study in detail of the next two centuries would be a necessary preliminary. But already we can see in operation some of the causes of failure. In the first place, however, it may be remarked that the cause is not to be found in any special iniquity in the conquest as such. Even up to our own times in Europe there has been no general agreement as to the ethics of conquest, and in the twelfth century the blessed words 'democracy' and 'self-determination' were

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